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RETIREMENT LEGISLATION

BRIEF SHEET

1. There has been introduced into the Senate with the approval of the Bureau of the Budget a bill (S. 3638) on behalf of the U.S. Information Agency which, among other matters, would give to its Director the right to establish a retirement system patterned after the retirement system of the Foreign Service (retirement at age 50 after 20 years of service, etc.). This system would apply only to U.S. Information Officers, to be selected and appointed by the Director of USIA (an estimated 1,000 persons out of a total of 10,000). It is believed that the Committee on Foreign Relations, which has strongly recommended passage of the bill, was influenced by the authority also contained in the bill for the Director of USIA to establish selection panels for promotion and "selection out."
2. The pertinent sections are quoted below:

"UNITED STATES INFORMATION OFFICERS

"SEC. 1013. (a) In accordance with regulations prescribed by him and after suitable examination, the Director of the United States Information Agency may appoint persons to be known as United States Information Officers. Such officers shall be appointed, promoted, and retained on the basis of merit and fitness and may be separated only in accordance with law. Except for the limitations of time contained in sections 522 and 527 of the Foreign Service Act of 1946, as amended, all provisions of law not inconsistent herewith which are applicable to Foreign Service Reserve Officers shall be applicable to United States Information Officers, and the Director shall be guided by the policies and principles prescribed in those sections. The Director shall establish such examining and selection boards or panels as may be necessary for use in the appointment, promotion, and separation of United States Information Officers.

"(b) Any United States Information Officer may be separated by the Director for unsatisfactory performance of duties, but only after a review of his case by, and opportunity for a hearing before, an impartial advisory board appointed by the Director. The Director shall also provide for the periodic appraisal of such officers and, in accordance with regulations prescribed by him, may separate those who are consistently ranked below a minimum level prescribed for their class.

"(c) The Director may establish an independent retirement and disability system for the benefit of the United States information officers based on the provisions of the Foreign Service Act of 1946, as heretofore or hereafter amended. Any officer separated pursuant to subsection (b) hereof shall be entitled to the payments or retirement benefits prescribed in sections 634 or 637 of that Act, as appropriate."